

THE TOWNSHIP CRIER

Fall | 2011 Charter Township of Marquette Newsletter



View of Hogback Mountain from Sugarloaf Mountain, October 2011



The North Country Trail

is America's longest National Scenic Trail stretching 4,600 miles from New York to North Dakota, linking 7 states, 10 National Forests and more than 150 public lands.

The NCT provides year-round recreation opportunities as it traverses America's north country and unites our red plaid nation.

Based in Marquette in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, the North Country Trail Hikers (NCTH) Chapter is responsible for developing, maintaining, protecting and promoting the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) in Marquette County and including, the segments that traverse through the northern portion of Marquette Township. The North Country Trail Hikers Chapter was the North Country Trail Association's (NCTA's) first chartered chapter. Currently, the chapter enjoys more than 130 members. Most members live in the Marquette area, with some residing farther away.

The chapter organizes a variety of activities, including three General Membership Meetings a year, in January, May and September, a semi-annual Softies Hike, trail maintenance work days, hikes, canoe/kayak excursions, and snowshoe and cross-country ski outings. Get out and enjoy this great trail network! To learn more or get involved, visit their website for maps and events at: www.northcountrytrail.org Take advantage of this great trail network located in our own "backyard!"

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TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

BOARD MEMBERS:

Dennis Liimatta, Supervisor	906-228-3436
Randy Ritari, Clerk	906-228-6220
Ernest Johnson, Treasurer	906-228-9422
Lyn Durant, Trustee	906-225-8003
Pete LaRue, Trustee	906-228-6656
Danny Pompo, Trustee	906-226-9569
Dianna Truscott, Trustee	906-226-6524

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

AUTHORITY:

Robert Sved
 Dennis Liimatta
 Ron DeMarse
 Tom Johnson
 Lynn Swadley
 David Savolainen - Vice Chairperson
 Chuck Oberstar
 Delynn Klein
 Robert Mahaney

DEPUTIES:

John Cebalo, Deputy Clerk
 Dulcee Storch, Deputy Treasurer

PLANNING COMMISSION:

Ellen Sargent - Chairperson
 Judy Boyle - Secretary
 Steve Pelto
 Lyn Durant
 Michael Springer

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS:

Peg VanOverloop, Chairperson
 Steven Heikkinen
 John Markes
 James O’Dovero
 Steve Pelto

BOARD OF REVIEW:

Judy Boyle
 Catherine Bolm
 John Wasmuth
 Dennis Liimatta



TOWNSHIP EMPLOYEES

Randy Girard, Manager
 Kirk Page, Superintendent of Public Works
 Dulcee Storch, Assessor/Deputy Treasurer
 Brenda Helgren, Accounts Clerk
 Jason McCarthy, Planner/Zoning Administrator
 Janelle Ruff, Planning Technician
 Lois Stonehouse, Accountant
 Joe Greet, Service Worker/Crew Leader
 Barry Marietta, Service Worker
 Leonard Bodenus, Well Operator
 Dave Larson, Service Worker
 Rob Mielke, Service Worker
 Dennis Andrews, Service Worker
 Ron DeMarse, Fire Marshal
 Greg Britton, Groundskeeper



FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Robert Sims, Fire Chief
 Dan Shanahan, Assistant Chief
 Ron DeMarse, Fire Marshal

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MARQUETTE

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 MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN 49855
 Ph: 906.228.6220
 Fx: 906.228.7337
 e-mail: marquettetownship@marquettetownship.org
 Web: www.marquettetownship.org
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Township Meetings: Township Board meetings are normally held on the first and third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. **Planning Commission** meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. The **Downtown Development Authority (DDA)** meetings are held on a quarterly basis on first Monday of that month at 7:00 p.m. The **Recreation Committee** meetings are normally held on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. All meetings are held at the Township Community Center.

THE PUBLIC IS ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND!

Public Access: The Township Board meetings may be seen on Channel 8 (Charter Communications Cable T.V.) on a taped delay basis, Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

MANAGER'S REPORT

By Manager, Randy Girard

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

We continue to see residential and commercial development interest in our Township that is resulting in a number of new development projects becoming visible; currently active projects include:

- **West Town Center** development is under construction and taking shape on the former Kulhaine Kennel site between Range Bank and the Animal Medical Center on Wright Street, the first business openings are planned for late November;
- A new road connection adjacent to the **Grandchamp, McBride & Prophet** building connecting Commerce Drive and Venture Drive is nearing completion;
- **Dr. Jeffrey Karr's** medical office building development is in process adjacent to the US Fish and Wildlife facility;
- **H&R Block's** renovation of interior space to join Verizon in the former Blockbuster building is nearing completion;
- **Target** has submitted plans for a minor exterior and interior retail space remodel to expand their grocery offerings;
- **Gleason Chiropractic and Northern Michigan Land Brokers** have relocated to the former State Farm office building adjacent to Buffalo Wild Wings;
- **Bride's Choice** has occupied two suites in the Marquette Center near Starbucks;
- **Fox Motors** service area expansion is nearing completion;
- **Cedarville Town Homes** has added a new three story building offering 40 residential units; and,
- a number of additional potential new projects; and re-uses of existing facilities are in very preliminary stages.

FIREARMS DISCHARGE

As a reminder, small and big hunting seasons began on Thursday, September 15th and generally raises inquiries regarding the discharge of firearms within the Township; particularly in the area of our municipal water wells and access roads where many public use trails exist. The Township does not regulate hunting, shooting, or other such recreational pursuits within our boundaries – these are under the authority and enforcement of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and are addressed by regulations published on their web pages (www.michigan.gov/dnr/) and in pamphlets available from the regional DNRE office and commercial sporting goods outlets. The DNRE published "safety zone" regulation is:

"Safety zones are defined as all areas within 450 feet of an occupied dwelling, house, cabin, residence, or any barn or other building used in a farm operation. No person may hunt, or discharge a firearm within a safety zone or shoot at any wild animal or wild bird while the bird or animal is within the safety zone, without the permission of the owner or occupant of such safety zone".

FY2012 BUDGET

The FY2012 balanced budget recommendation was distributed to the Board on August 26th; and has been under public discussion since that time. Public budget work sessions have been publicly noticed and held on September 19th, 20th, 22nd, and 26th; October 3rd, 4th, 13th, and 18th; November 1st, and 2nd. The next budget work sessions for November are scheduled for the 14th at 5:30pm to 6:30pm, and the 29th at 5:30pm to 7:00pm. The required public hearing on the proposed final 2012 budget and tax levy is anticipated to be held on Tuesday, December 6th at 7:00pm; with final 2012 budget adoption anticipated on Tuesday, December 20th at 7:00pm. Final 2012 budget adoption must occur by Friday, December 30th.

Continued from page 3

Werner Street Pedestrian Strip

The reconstruction of Werner Street east of Ontario/ County Road 498 is now completed; and open for public use. The improvement project included construction of a paved non-motorized pathway on the north side. This pathway is for non-motorized use; and is not available for any vehicle use, including parking for any period of time. Violations will be subject to civil enforcement including citation and fines.

Marquette Township Lions Club

Township Trustee Pete LaRue is working hard to re-establish a Marquette Township Lions Club to continue the rich tradition of service in the Township. The former Lions Club was the benefactor providing the original Lions Field and Kiddee Park to the Community. Should you have interest in assisting Trustee LaRue, or becoming a member, contact him at 228-6656 or through the Township offices at 228-6220.

Holiday Observances

Township Offices will be closed on the following dates for the observance of the holiday season:

Thursday, November 24th
Friday, November 25th

Friday, December 23rd
Monday, December 26th

Monday, January 2nd

Emergency needs will be met with on-call Township staff by calling 228-6220 and follow the instruction to page the on-call staff.

Catch the Spirit of Christmas

The **Community Events Committee** is planning to help you "Catch the Spirit of Christmas" with a community event on the evening of Tuesday, November 29th from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. The family event will include lighting of the community Christmas tree (with a special appearance anticipated), sleigh rides, refreshments, and seasonal music entertainment. All residents, guests, visitors, and businesses are invited and encouraged to join in the celebration.

Communication With Residents

You likely noticed that this issue of the Township Crier is fewer pages, mailed, and geared to a quarterly publication. We are trying this new format to improve the timeliness of our communication to you of Township events, issues, and general information. The objective is to expand participation in forming the direction that your Township government moves in looking to the future. We recently conducted a community survey in conjunction with the Planning Commission update of the Township Master Plan, formerly known as the Comprehensive Plan. A random sample of 1,500 surveys were sent out, with 434 being returned – that's a 28.9% response rate; which is considered quite good and statistically significant as surveys go. Good as that is for survey results, it represents the opinion of only 434 of our 3,905 residents. Our objective is to hear the opinion of as many residents as possible; and to that end an e-mail directory is being compiled for more effective direct communication on important issues. If you have not as yet given us your e-mail address, and would like to be communicated with in that manner, please forward your e-mail address to Brenda Helgren at brendahelgren@marquettetownship.org. Our e-mail directory will be proprietary for our own use, and will not be otherwise available.

Upcoming Board/Committee Participation Opportunities

Appointments to fill vacancies on the following Township boards and committees will occur at the December 6th and 20th Township Board meetings:

Recreation Committee, Zoning Board of Appeals, Property Maintenance Appeals, Senior Citizens Services Transition Board, Beautification Committee, and Community Events Committee.

Application for appointment to these opportunities to serve your community are available on-line at www.marquettetownship.org under documents, or at the Township Center.

Check It Out

Take a look at the Township web site www.marquettetownship.org, and keep updated on our Facebook page at :

Marquette Charter Township/UP.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

By Township Supervisor, Dennis Liimatta

Summer sure went by fast it seems, as I write this article the ground is covered with our first snowfall of the year. The time I spend in the woods each year at this time provides me the opportunity to quietly reflect upon the past year – did I accomplish what I set out to do back in January? Is there still work to be done? The same can be said for what we as a Board of Trustee's should be asking ourselves, as well as the residents of the Township: did we accomplish what we set out to do this year? Is there still work to be done? Are we even working on the right things?

As I reflect upon our achievements as a Township for the year, I can remember many highlights. Most of you are aware of the Strategic Agenda we developed and have been working on (the large banner that hangs on the wall behind the board table during meetings). These goals and objectives were developed by the Board members based upon input from residents who participated in the planning sessions held over several weeks and developed into a 2 year scope of work. You told us what we needed to work on, and we focused on those objectives.

We have made progress on developing a new Township Hall/Community Center, but the real decision will only come when we hold the townhall meetings to finalize our decision. Will you participate?

The improvements to the community parks have taken shape at Lions Field. The ball field and pavilion have been redone, we are working on the ice rink, and planning for improvements at kiddee park for next year. None of this would be possible without community involvement and volunteers, as well as generous donations from many area businesses and individuals. We will continue to explore acquiring property that holds the well fields south of Grove St., to protect our drinking water and recreational opportunities. The community garden has slowly developed and could be ready to move forward in the spring, if there is enough interested people to make it happen. Can you help?

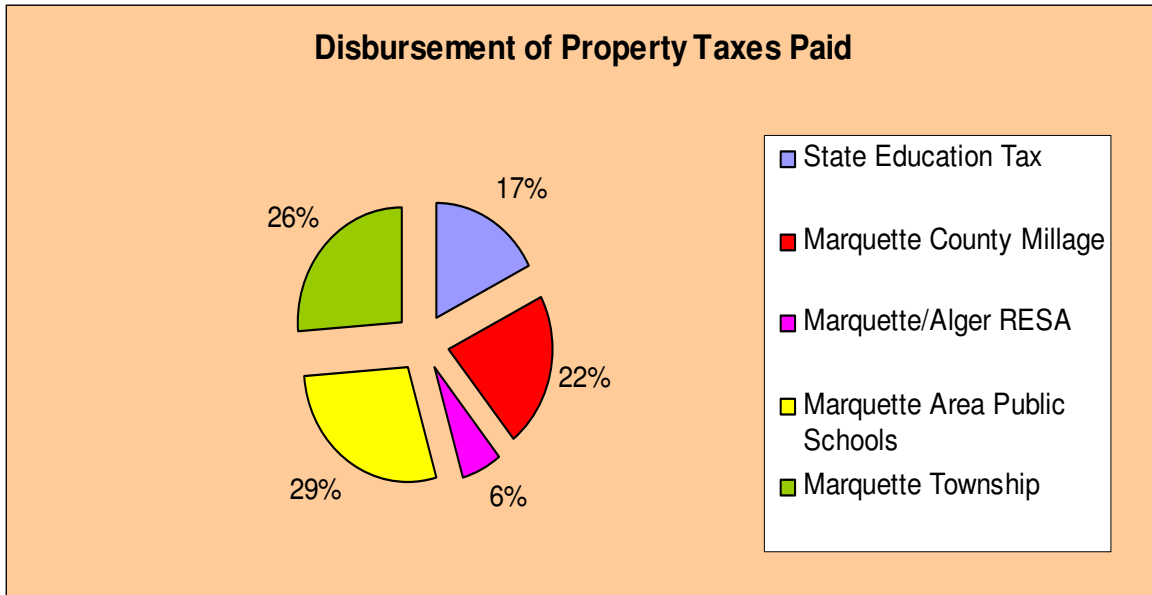
Several community committees have been working very hard to make this a better place to live, work, and play. I would like to recognize the Road, Beautification, and Events Committee's for all their hard work this past year. Werner St. is nearing completion, we have held a couple very successful community celebrations, and the flower plantings around the Township were the best we have seen in years! But these folks still need more volunteers to make it even bigger and better for coming years. Do you have an interest and a couple hours to spare to make your community better?

All these accomplishments were driven by the strategic agenda, and those of you who participated in those meetings developed that agenda. So, do you see a theme here? If your neighborhood and community are not what you want them to be, you need to jump in with both feet and make a difference.

You hear a lot about government doesn't really represent the people, or what they want and need. Or that elected officials are out of touch. But I've said it before and I'll say it again, this is not a spectator sport! Your elected officials are here to act as stewards of the future, and make sure we have the foresight to have resources available to recognize and meet the demands of the community. But that means we need to know what the majority of residents want and need. Have an idea? We can't wait to see you at the next meeting!



WHERE DO MY PROPERTY TAX DOLLARS GO?



What happens to your property taxes dollars after you pay your taxes to the Marquette Township Treasurer?

Every two (2) weeks during the months of July thru February there is a tax distribution that takes place by the Marquette Township Treasurer to distribute the taxes collected to the proper taxing jurisdictions.

Checks are issued to the taxing jurisdictions based on the amounts collected during that two week period.

The Marquette Township portion of taxes cover the 4.9050 millage for operating expenses, the 2.5 millage for Fire Department expenses, the 0.9061 millage for Library expenses, and the 0.8492 millage for roads.

«CustomerName1»
 «CustomerName2»
 «ServiceAddress»
 «CustomerCity», «CustomerStProv»
 «CustomerZipPostal»

PRESORTED
 FIRST CLASS MAIL
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 MARQUETTE, MI
 PERMIT NO. 21

Marquette Township
 161 County Road 492
 Marquette, MI 49855